Task Force to combat AIDS

2353. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Task Force set up to his Ministry to combat AIDS has taken off;

(b) whether it is a fact that it is still in the non-functional state;

(c) what is the schedule for this Task Force to start working;

(d) whether it has considered the reluctance of doctors to treat AIDS patients; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) to (e) The Government has formulated a comprehensive strategy to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in the country consisting of generation of awareness among risk-behaviour group and other people, blood safety and rational use of blood, control of sexually transmitted diseases, better facilities for surveillance, clinical diagnosis and management of HIV/AIDS cases. A wing of the Ministry known as the National AIDS Control Organisation has been established for this purpose. Detialed action plans have been drawn up and their implementation is being vigoroualy pursued.

Research Projects of ICMR

2354. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it i a fact that the Indian Council of Medical Research had taken up 23 research projects to assess the effect of Bhopal gas leak case on the lungs, muscles etc. of the victims;

(b) the expenditure incurred on each of the research projects;

(c) the findings of these projects; and

(d) the measures taken or proposed to be taken on the basis of these findings?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) to (d) ICMR has undertaken 29 research projects at a total cost of Rs. 683.09 lakhs. The findings related to epidemiological aspects, including immediate mortality and morbidity, ophthalmic and respiratory complaints, effects on pregnancy and the new born and also mental health. The Government has been providing medical relief to the gas victims free of cost. Facilities in Government run institutions have been substantially strengthened. Establishment of a 540 bedded Kamla Nehru Hospital has been taken up to provide inpatient facilities.

Supply of blood in Government Hospitals of Delhi

2355. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report appearing in the Times of India dated 11-12-93 regarding the Government hospitals in Delhi getting their entire upply of blood through public tenders ignoring the dangers of AIDS; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to prevent the practice of obtaining blood having high risk of HIV infection?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) It came to the notice of the Government that ESIC had been inviting tenders for the supply of blood for transfusion purposes from registered blood banks. The matter was taken up with the ESIC and they have since decided to have their own blood bank in their hospital at Basai-Darapur.